

## Message Text

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73 L

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03

SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PRS-01 L-03 SR-02

ORM-03 OMB-01 DODE-00 DRC-01 CCO-00 SSO-00 /124 W

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R 191348Z DEC 73

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4841

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1516

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF

SUBJECT: WEST BANK ATTITUDES ON PALESTINIAN QUESTIONS

REF: JERUSALEM 1373

SUMMARY: WHILE BASIC SET OF ATTITUDES REMAINS ESSENTIALLY  
UNCHANGED, SOME SECOND THOUGHTS AND QUALIFICATIONS ARE EVIDENT.  
SIGNALS FROM OUTSIDE WORLD HAVE BECOME MORE AMBIGUOUS ON PLO  
ROLE, EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE ABOUT HUSSEIN, ETC., AND WEST BANK  
SOCIETY, HIGHLY DERIVATIVE IN ITS POLITICS, REFLECTS THIS.  
END SUMMARY

1. IN OUR LAST ASSESSMENT OF WEST BANK OPINION (REFTEL) WE  
CONCLUDED THERE WAS STRONG CURRENT RUNNING FOR PLO REPRESENTATION  
AND A SEPARATE PALESTINIAN STATE, AND AGAINST HUSSEIN. THIS IS  
STILL BASICALLY THE CASE, BUT SITUATION NOW SEEMS MORE MARKED BY  
EDDIES AND CROSS-CURRENTS. WE ATTRIBUTE THIS MAINLY TO LOSS OF  
CLARITY AND MOMENTUM ON THESE ISSUES IN ARAB WORLD GENERALLY.  
PALESTINIANS ARE NOT GOING TO GENEVA OPENING; PUBLIC STATEMENTS  
OF FEDAYEEN LEADERS SEEM TO BELIEVE EARLIER IMPRESSION THAT MOVE-  
MENT WAS RELATIVELY UNITED ON REALISTIC AND, FOR WEST BANK,  
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PROMISING COURSE; THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT SIGNS OF AMBIVALENCE IN

ATTITUDES OF EGYPTIANS AND SOVIETS TOWARD POLO; HUSSEIN SEEMS CLEARLY TO BE STILL IN THE PICTURE; ETC.

2. WEST BANK SOCIETY TENDS TO DERIVE ITS POLITICAL VIEWS AND INSPIRATION FROM OUTSIDE RATHER THAN GENERATE THEM ITSELF. IT SELECTS AMONG OPTIONS SERVED UP BY OTHERS. FOLLOWING EGYPTIAN LEAD, ONE HEARS MORE FREQUENT MENTION NOW OF TWO-STAGE NEGOTIATION, IN WHICH ARAB GOVERNMENTS FIRST RECOVER ARAB TERRITORIES LOST IN 1967 AND THE PALESTINIANS NEGOTIATE WITH ISRAEL FOR "THEIR RIGHTS." HUSSEIN-ORIENTED NOTABLE ANWAR KHATIB AND OTHERS OF MODERATE STRIKE SEEM TO SUPPORT THIS CONCEPT. KHATIB GOES ON TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT PALESTINIANS COULD SETTLE FOR NOTHING LESS THAN 1947 PARTITION--CLEARLY UNOBTAINABLE NOW--AND THEREFORE SITUATION WILL BE SUSPENDED BETWEEN TWO PHASES FOR SOME TIME WITHOUT TRUE PEACE (FOR HIM THIS COULD BE AS MUCH HOPE AS PREDICTION, SINCE JORDANIANS WOULD BE IN CHARGE HERE).

3. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, REMARKABLY LITTLE IS HEARD ABOUT PALESTINIAN GOALS IN SECOND PHASE ASIDE FROM ISSUE OF SEPARATE STATE. MORE RADICAL SAY WITH KHATIB, BUT FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, THAT 1947 BOUNDARIES ARE MINIMUM. MODERATES TALK VAGUELY ABOUT RIGHT OF REFUGEES TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, WITH COMPENSATION IF THEY DO NOT, BUT NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT TO QUESTION.

4. ON REPRESENTATION ISSUE, FOCUS HAS CONTINUED TO SHIFT FROM PLO ALONE TO BROADLY-BASED PALESTINIAN SELECTION INCLUDING PLO. THERE IS STILL TALK OF PALESTINE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEETING, NOW RUMORED FOR CAIRO IN JANUARY, TO WHICH LARGE NUMBER WEST BANKERS WOULD BE INVITED. KHATIB HIMSELF HAS PAID TRIBUTE TO EFFORTS OF PLO TO GET INTO CONTACT WITH LEADING WEST BANKERS (HE COMPLAINED BITTERLY THAT AMMAN HAD NOT MADE SUCH EFFORTS).

5. ON SEPARATE STATE ISSUE SOME BLURRING OF LINES BETWEEN STARK ALTERNATIVES ALSO APPARENT. SEPARATE STATE STILL HAS WIDE SUPPORT BUT ONE HEARS MORE OFTEN THAT LONG-RUN DESTINY OF WEST BANK IS WITH EAST BANK, PERHAPS AFTER PERIOD AS SEPARATE STATE AND CERTAINLY UNDER OTHER ARRANGEMENTS THAN PREVIOUSLY. ON OTHER SIDE OF QUESTION, SOME HUSSEIN LAYALISTS SUCH AS KHATIB NOW PAINT EARLIER JORDANIAN RULE IN DARKER COLORS AND ARGUE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE WEST BANK AUTONOMY IN ANY FUTURE ARRANGEMENT.  
DAY

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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